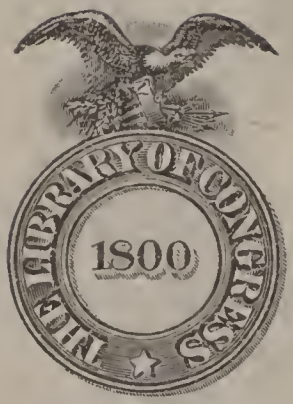
In Memoriam

J. M. R.



IN MEMORIAM

J. W. B.

BOSTON:
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PREFACE.

FEW words are needed to explain the origin and contents of this volume, which is not addressed to the public, but only to those who knew and loved the subject of its pages. It contains, —

I. A Memoir of the Life of John W. Browne, by his friend, John A. Andrew.

II. A Sermon preached at the Third Congregational Church, Hingham, May 6, 1860, by Rev. Charles C. Shackford.

III. An Extract from a Sermon preached at the North Church, Salem, June 3, 1860, by Rev. Edmund B. Willson.

IV. A Resolution adopted by the New England Anti-Slavery Convention, May 31, 1860, together with an Extract from the Speech of Wendell Phillips.

V. Some Remarks concerning Mr. Browne, by his classmate, James Dana, July 18, 1860.

VI. Some Remarks concerning Mr. Browne, by his classmate, Charles Sumner.

VII. Selections from the Notices of the Life and Character of Mr. Browne, which appeared in the newspapers of the day; of which it may be permitted to mention that that signed with the initial "A" was written by Samuel P. Andrews, and that signed "*" by Dr. Walter Channing.

Several of Mr. Shackford's hearers had requested from him a copy of his discourse for publication, when, the fact becoming known, it was suggested that it might well be accompanied from the press by these other testimonials of respect for Mr. Browne's memory. The suggestion was willingly accepted, and the work of collecting and arranging these pages has been affectionately and reverently performed by A. G. B., Jr.

MEMOIR

BY

JOHN A. ANDREW.

When to the common rest that crowns our days,
Called in the noon of life, the good man goes,
* * * * when our bitter tears
Stream as the eyes of those that love us close,
We think on what they were, with many fears
Lest goodness die with them and leave the coming years.

Peace to the just man's memory; let it grow
Greener with years, and blossom through the flight
Of ages; * * * let the light
Stream on his deeds of love that shunned the sight
Of all but heaven.

THE AGES.

MEMOIR.

JOHN WHITE BROWNE was born at Salem, March 29, 1810, and at the time of his death, May 1, 1860, had, therefore, recently completed his fiftieth year. He was the son of James and Lydia (Vincent) Browne, and his father was the eldest lineal descendant of Elder John Browne, the Ruling Elder of the First Church in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, whose appointment in 1660, the Reverend John Higginson made a condition of his own assumption of the clerical charge, and who is probably identical with John Browne, one of the Assistants named in the original charter of the Colony in 1628, who, with his brother Samuel, was banished in 1629 for a supposed leaning towards Episcopacy, but returned to Salem after an interval of several years, which were passed in England and Maryland.

Few persons of the rare qualities of intellect which our friend possessed by nature, and of so precious acquirements, from reading and reflection, have at the

age of fifty years done less than he to attract the curiosity or the attention of the public; while fewer still, of whatever capacity or culture, have lived more useful lives, or died more truly loved, respected, and reverenced by those to whom they were known. The tribute to his memory, contained in the discourse of his friend, who, of all the tenants of the pulpit, was perhaps nearest to his heart, leaves less to be added than might otherwise be written; but a brief and simple outline of some of the principal facts of his life, will help to complete the record.

Mr. Browne was devoted quite early to one of the learned professions. He was fitted for college at the Salem Classical School, (the first classical school ever established in New England,) under the care of masters Theodore Ames and Henry K. Oliver. He entered Harvard College in 1826, and was graduated as one of the first scholars of the class of 1830. That class numbered among its members the late Thomas Hopkinson, a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Massachusetts, and Charles Sumner, now one of the Senators in Congress from that State; and during the whole of Mr. Browne's collegiate life, he was the chum of one or the other of those gentlemen. After graduation, he commenced the study of the law at the Law School connected with the University, and

pursued it further in the office of the late Rufus Choate at Salem. After the removal of Mr. Choate to Boston, in 1832, he became a student with the late Leverett Saltonstall, so many years the President and leader of the Essex bar, with whom he completed his novitiate as a lawyer. Those who shared the intimate confidence of Mr. Browne in his later years, will remember how his voice and eye kindled and warmed whenever he spoke of these and of some other friends of his earlier manhood. His love of quiet, patient, truth-seeking pursuits, — of that search for knowledge which is its own reward, — must have made this period of study, compared with all other passages of his life, one of peculiar happiness and satisfaction; and those who had guided or befriended him in threading his way, and especially such as had then won his personal affection, were cherished and remembered by him with the utmost fidelity.

After his admission to the bar, Mr. Browne became resident at Lynn, and began there the practice of his profession. There he continued in the performance of its ordinary duties until his removal to Boston, where the variety and extent of employment affords opportunity for subdivision of labor and for some selection on the part of the practitioner. In Boston, he devoted himself almost exclusively to the department of

conveyancing and to office-practice, avoiding, except at rare intervals, the anxieties and excitements of the court-room. Notwithstanding a singular directness and clearness of vision, a great capacity to learn and to remember both principles and details, a perception which no sophistry could deceive, a power of discrimination which could defy every difficulty and entanglement, a style of writing and of speech, and a manner, voice and temperament all fitted for the eloquence of the forum, a moral hesitation was from the first always in the way of his self-possession, and therefore of his success in the arena of the bar. But if he did not perfectly succeed, yet he never failed. Whatever forensic task he undertook, he accomplished to the satisfaction of his audience, if not of himself; and when I have contrasted the bold nonsense of shallow declaimers, sometimes mistaken for argumentative oratory, and often winning the crown, with the crystal reasoning, simple and beautiful statement, chaste and forcible style of John W. Browne, as I have occasionally heard him, and when I have seen him persistently avoiding the high places which his refined morality would have purified and ennobled, I have sometimes felt that his self-imposed restraint was a testimony against us all.

While residing at Lynn, Mr. Browne represented

that town in the Legislature, in 1837. The impression which he made upon his associates in this brief and youthful connection with public and political affairs, was such that, to his own surprise, and during his temporary absence from the State, the Whig Convention of Essex County, in 1838, nominated him as a candidate for the Senate of the Commonwealth. But the confidence inspired by his integrity, and the respect commanded by his talents, were unperceived by him in a degree hardly to be understood in the instance of any one of less sensitive modesty. His strength of purpose was surpassed only by the strength of his convictions, which were set forth in the letter in which he declined to accept the nomination. He was then but twenty-eight years old. He had a career before him in which he might have secured distinction as a public man, and have been no less useful than distinguished; but a pure heart, simple tastes, and a modest choice of a position in life, forbade an encounter with the bewilderments and the possibilities of moral entanglement and mischance, which such a career might involve. His letter of declination (which was the last act of his life in connection with the politics of any party), well deserves to be rescued from forgetfulness, and to be recorded where his friends may read the wisdom of that rare young man,

whose prophecy of more than twenty years ago he lived to see historically fulfilled.

LYNN, November 5, 1838.

To the Whig County Committee of the County of Essex.

GENTLEMEN, —

I respectfully decline the nomination as a candidate for the Senate of Massachusetts, with which the Whig Convention at Ipswich have honored me. Upon my return home on Friday evening last, after a temporary absence from the State, I was informed of the nomination. It was wholly unexpected by me. Had I received, beforehand, any intimation that my name would be presented to the Convention, I should have authorized some one of the Delegates to withdraw it. Before leaving home, thinking that during my absence the nomination for Representatives from this town to the General Court would be made by the Whigs, I requested one of my friends here to be present at the caucus, and in my name to decline a reëlection, intending to disconnect myself entirely from party politics. In the contest against the past and present administrations of the general government, I have been and am a Whig. I have been and am a Whig, because I have been and am a Democrat, not otherwise. In my opinion, the claim of the Van Buren party, as

a party, to Democracy, is wholly unfounded. In my opinion, the political morality of the country has degenerated, office has become a speculation, political principles a stock in trade, the rights of minorities a thing of no account, and government, practically, the fierce and uncontrolled will of the strongest faction, (and this not in one party alone, but in a measure in the other, since evil will provoke retaliation, and tends to reproduce itself,) mainly through the influence of the administration of the general government for the last nine years. But for several years past, it has seemed to me that this strife of the two great political parties was occasional and temporary; and that both had forgotten or overlooked in their controversy the great principles of equal liberty for all, upon which a free government must rest as its only true and safe basis. To these principles my paramount allegiance is given, and Whiggism and Toryism are of no account when weighed with them. Our government is theoretically free, but the country is not a free country. One sixth of its whole population are slaves. I disconnect myself from party, whose iron grasp holds hard even upon the least of us, and mean in my little sphere as a private individual, to serve what seems to me the cause of the country and humanity. I cannot place currency above liberty;

I cannot place money above man; I cannot fight heartily for the Whigs and against their opponents, when I feel that whichever shall be the victorious party, the claims of humanity will be forgotten in the triumph, and that the rights of the slave may be crushed beneath the advancing hosts of the victors. The question of slavery, in which marvellous events in Congress and in the country within the last three or four years have shown the liberties of the nation to be bound up, not for the black alone, but for the white, *for us all*, is first with me. The South, *and the North*, the whole country are concerned in it; for in the language of Mr. Webster, (never more applicable than here,) "We have one Country, one Constitution, one Destiny." This truth is as tremendous in the prospect of evil, as it is thrilling in its hope of good. Slavery was the element of discord in the Convention which framed the Constitution of the United States; it is the seminal principle of discord in the country; and almost all the conflicting questions which have agitated the country since the adoption of the Constitution, have sprung out of it. Slavery made a protecting tariff, and then made nullification, and unmade a protecting tariff; and slavery now is at the bottom of the Southern zeal against a Bank of the United States, and in favor of the sub-

treasury, as the speeches of Southern men, and the reports of the late Southern conventions at Augusta and Richmond conclusively show. He who goes for the abolition of slavery, would cut off *the source* out of which conflicting questions of public policy grow. These questions are subordinate to it in point of principle; most of them arise out of it, and are the offspring of it, in point of fact. I therefore know, and can know, no party, when the rights of man, in the question of slavery, come in competition with party.

In the approaching elections, my sympathies are with the Whig party, and my vote will be with them so far as the principles above set forth will permit it. Grateful for the honor which the Whig party would have conferred upon me,

I am, respectfully yours,

JOHN W. BROWNE.

After the removal of Mr. Browne's office to Boston, where it remained until his death, he divided his residence between Boston and Hingham, which town was the birthplace of his wife, Miss Martha A. G. Lincoln, to whom he was married in 1842. Their only child, Laura, was born in 1843. To Hingham our friend always retreated upon the approach of the summer months; and the delight of his days was, there, in

the peaceful seclusion of that quiet and ancient town, so full of rural beauty, to indulge his love of Nature and her works and ways. A holiday, the remnant of an afternoon, an hour at evening twilight or in the early morning, — when either could be stolen from sleep or withdrawn from care, — always found him absorbed in the full happiness which he nowhere found so surely as in the work of his garden, in his trees and flowers. If through his father's ancestry he inherited the rigorous integrity of the Puritan Elder, so from the Italian blood which also mingled in his veins he seemed to have derived the instinctive perception and enjoyment of natural beauty so characteristic of the people of Italy, and which no author ever appreciated or delineated more finely than his townsman, Hawthorne.

Although not affecting general society, and avoiding so much as he did public life, (under-estimating, indeed, his own capacity and adaptation for social and for public uses,) Mr. Browne was no recluse. He was genial, cordial, and good-humored. He enjoyed with the keenest relish his talk with those who had anything to say beyond the commonplaces of conversation. He had a quick eye and ear for innocent mirth, for delicate wit, and for a good-natured joke, although he was oftentimes singularly obtuse to coarse

displays of humor. He entered with the warmest sympathy into the amusements and amenities of his social circle, with the cordiality of one who loved the happiness of all, and whose own heart was light with innocence. Ill health, or a sensitive nature, or both, occasionally gave him an air of weariness, and he was never, perhaps, distinguished for that flow of buoyant spirits which comes of animal vigor, great hopefulness, and indifference to the little mishaps of life. Still, he never spoke of any private grief, and never obtruded on his friends any personal unhappiness, or pain of mind or body. His delicate and considerate kindness forbade him to share his own private burdens with others, but he strengthened himself and lightened his load, as the noble unselfishness of good hearts always strives to do, by the inspirations of sympathy with others, and love for his neighbor.

For twelve or fourteen years our mutual habit of residing at Hingham through the summer, and of being fellow-passengers on the steamboat plying thither, night and morning; the pursuits which we had in common, both professional and otherwise; and the great attraction I found in his character and the charms of his refined and cultivated understanding; led me to an intimacy of acquaintance with him such as I think

has never existed between myself and any other man. It is this which has led me to speak of him now; and though those of us who were in the near presence of his influence may never realize more keenly than at this moment, when the turf is still green over his head, how much his unselfish example, his unbeclouded sense of Truth and Right, and his unambitious philosophy, made him to us; yet when I reflect on the inadequacy of words to portray any man, and on my own unfitness to comprehend, even more to describe, this one, I feel that those who knew him will scarcely recognize the original, and that those who did not know him, will never learn much of him, from what is written.

Perhaps the most prominent and striking feature of his moral nature was his genuine honesty with himself. If he was meek, yet he was terribly bold when truth demanded. And his courage began at home. He always accused and tried himself before he denounced any other man. Hence flowed a sense of freedom, — a self-emancipation, — which liberated him from the thousand bonds which hamper men who are constrained by the necessities of pretence and sham. This also cleared his mental vision and his perception of moral distinctions, — so that he walked in the green pastures and beside the still

waters of a life obedient to the precepts of a sincere heart and a transparent intellect.

His conversation was the best I ever heard. It was above pretension. It was not ornate, nor brilliant, nor witty, nor learned. But it was the wisest talk coming from the clearest insight, and the truest purpose to know the Truth and to declare it simply. It was not narrow nor one-sided; but catholic, generous, comprehensive. It was not barbed nor paradoxical, like that of most fine talkers, but it was toned down to gentle harmony with all the good he knew or believed, and was restrained by the just respect he felt for every sincere conviction of others.

He was not a man of extensive reading, — not a cormorant of books. He read much in good books, not from curiosity, but for reflection; and he knew the best thought of the past and of his own time, while for the great miscellaneous mass of literature with which most of us divert ourselves, at least occasionally, he had no taste; and he spent no time upon it.

In religion he was bound by no formalities. He was as free in his creed as the morning bird, but he was guided by solemn convictions, was profoundly devout, and lived in the constant sense of the providence and love of God.

He was progressive in his practical philosophy, — not destructive, but hopeful and constructive. He could not excuse what he felt to be wrong, but he knew how, for righteousness' sake, to be patient with the wrongdoer. But when sometimes the pent-up energies of his emotion burst from restraint under the pressure of the sight of some unwonted or surprising injustice, his words would fall like burning stones from volcanic fires.

As a lawyer he was patient and faithful. His learning was exact and symmetrical, and whenever the solid ground of established principle could be reached, his judgment was as sound as his logic was unerring. In artificial rules, not founded on apparent reason, he had little interest, and an adjudication of the law against natural justice he regarded as an absolute abomination.

The domestic life of our friend it is not for any one to penetrate. Those only who in losing him have lost husband, father, or brother, can nearest realize how genuine a man he was. In the sacred closeness of these relations he found the most celestial happiness which a terrestrial experience can know; and to those of us who saw how tenderly he was devoted to his kindred, it needed no witness-proof to give assurance that the suggestion of suicide which sprang

from the sudden accident of his death, was groundless — utterly. But it may afford some satisfaction to other and remoter acquaintances to know in detail the circumstances of his removal from life, and therefore I commend to the full perusal and confidence of all, the following letter from his nephew, in which they are carefully reviewed: —

"Salem, May 22, 1860.

Dear Mr. Andrew, —

It is only at the earnest request of many friends of my late uncle, Mr. John W. Browne, — yourself among the number, — that I address this letter nominally to you, but really to all who knew him, for the purpose of making an authoritative statement concerning the manner of his death. His life was so secluded, his taste so delicate, and his dread of wounding the feelings of others so vivid, that it would have been a great pain to him if he had foreseen that it was to become a matter of public speculation how he died; and the inclination of his relatives has thus far been to suffer in silence the cruel imputation which was cast upon his memory by the public prints, consoled by their own complete consciousness that the manner of his death must have been consistent with the purity of his life, whatever

rumors might exist to the contrary. But they nevertheless assigned to me the painful labor of investigating to its source the report that his end was voluntary, and I have done so impartially. I am now assured by those whose judgment I respect, that it has become a duty to my uncle's family to clear away any suspicion which may possibly remain in any mind that his death was not accidental, and I therefore make the following statement, reluctantly yielding my disposition to their desire.

The result of my investigation is, that there is not a single circumstance to justify the inference of suicide. On the morning of Tuesday, May 1, Mr. Browne left Boston in order to argue in the Probate Court at Middleborough a case which required the attendance of three witnesses, — brothers. One of them accompanied him. The others, who resided at Hingham, were to join him at the junction of the Old Colony and South Shore railroads, in Braintree. But only one of these two was present, and he stated that his brother was confined to his bed by sickness. Mr. Browne said at once that it would be impossible to adjust the business unless all three witnesses should be present. The party proceeded to Stoughton, where they met the up-train. From Stoughton one witness continued on to Middleborough, to ar-

range for a postponement of the case, while Mr. Browne and the witness who had accompanied him from Boston, started upon their return to the city. At Braintree, their train stopped for the engine to be supplied with water; and several passengers got out there, and walked upon the platform. There was less delay than had been expected, and the conductor called suddenly to everybody to return to the cars. In the bustle, Mr. Browne was separated from his companion. The latter regained his seat, but the seat which Mr. Browne had occupied was taken by a stranger, and when the train started he was standing, with two or three other persons, outside the door upon the platform of the car. These others soon retired into the car, but he, refraining (with a sensitive modesty which no friend can fail to recognize) from claiming his seat, remained outside, preferring, if he must stand, to stand in clean air, rather than in the foul atmosphere within. The wind was blowing freshly. He was standing with one foot resting upon the upper step, the other upon the platform. He was seen to raise his hand as if to secure his hat from the breeze, and at the same instant was swung off by the sudden turn of the train around a sharp curve. The eye-witnesses of the event inform me that they saw all that any

one could have seen, and that there was not a gesture, a word, or a look, which indicated suicide. The position of the body and of the hat, after falling, and the condition of the body, confirm the fact that there was no physical preparation for a leap from the car. Mr. Browne's companion recollects nothing that was not natural and cheerful in his conversation and demeanor all the morning. The report that the death was voluntary, which appeared in the evening papers of that day, was based on information furnished by a person whose name I withhold only from consideration for his feelings, when in this connection I insert the following note, which was signed by him several days since: —

"Boston, May 11, 1860.

"At the request of Mr. Albert G. Browne, Jr., I state for the information of the friends of Mr. John W. Browne, that I gave to the evening newspapers of May 1st the information which was the basis of their articles concerning Mr. Browne's death; but that I did not then, nor do I now know, nor have I heard anything which induces me to believe, that his death was not produced by an accidental fall from the platform of the car. Any intimation which I may have given that the act was suicidal, was the

inconsiderate result of the impression of the moment, which subsequent reflection convinces me was erroneous, and which I sincerely regret."

Among my uncle's papers, not a line was found to indicate an intention of suicide; the condition of his business repels any such assumption; there was nothing in his pecuniary circumstances to induce such a deed; and those of us who enjoyed his confidence are well aware how sacred a trust he considered life to be. By a singular chance, his last few days were passed among his kindred in this old and peaceful town, in a brief vacation from the cares of his profession. Here, after a long interval of absence, he had been refreshing his remembrance of the scenes of his young life and early professional study. It seemed as if Providence in mercy had led him back to the old homestead, in order that his last days might be filled with no other than the pleasant recollections of a time when he knew no sorrows or anxieties but those of a child. He had returned to his office, refreshed and reinvigorated, only on the morning before that which was his last.

I believe that there is nothing now left to me to say, except to express a hope that never may another circle of family and friends be cut to the heart as

this has been, by a report published by the newspapers, with so little inquiry as to its truth, or consideration for the feelings of those whom it might wound.

Yours sincerely,

A. G. BROWNE, Jr.

One circumstance not referred to in this letter, may well be mentioned. For many weeks Mr. Browne's feeble health had been attended by faintness and dizziness as one of its symptoms. How far this in his then weak condition may have affected him and conspired to cause his fall and death, is not to be known, although the fact is not to be forgotten in its connection. But I will not, — and cannot, — seem to apologize to man for the providence of God.

A noble and manly life has closed on earth. Its last few days were more than usually serene and cheerful; and the prevailing character of their thoughts and aspirations is beautifully portrayed in the following lines,* found in his pocket-book after his death. Less than a week before, while walking with their author over the pasture-lands around his native town, he had repeated them with a fervor and pathos which will live in the hearer's memory forever.

* From "Essays and Poems by Jones Very," Boston, 1839, page 175.

Wilt Thou not visit me?
The plant beside me feels thy gentle dew;
And every blade of grass I see
From thy deep earth its quickening moisture drew.

Wilt Thou not visit me?
Thy morning calls on me with cheering tone;
And every hill and tree
Lend but one voice, the voice of thee alone.

Come, for I need thy love
More than the flower the dew, or grass the rain;
Come, gently as thy holy dove,
And let me in thy sight rejoice to live again.

I will not hide from them
When thy storms come, though fierce may be their wrath,
But bow with leafy stem,
And strengthened, follow on thy chosen path.

Yes, Thou wilt visit me;
Nor plant nor tree thine eye delight so well
As when from sin set free
My spirit loves with thine in peace to dwell.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE THIRD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, HINGHAM, MAY 6, 1860, (THE SUNDAY AFTER THE DEATH OF JOHN W. BROWNE,)

BY

CHARLES C. SHACKFORD.

Hingham, May 8, 1860.

Dear Sir,—

The undersigned, having listened with great satisfaction to the sermon preached to the Third Congregational Society in Hingham, on Sunday last, in which you so faithfully delineated the character of John W. Browne, would respectfully request a copy for publication, confidently believing that all who knew him will be glad to possess so just a tribute to his memory.

We remain, with great regard,

Your obedient servants,

Benjamin Lincoln,
Daniel Thaxter.

Rev. C. C. Shackford.

—♦—

Lynn, May 11, 1860.

Dear Sirs,—

The sermon is at the disposal of the friends of our common friend. It is not "a delineation of his character," but a presentation of such impressions of his life as seemed appropriate to the place, time, and occasion. The special individual traits of personal character which so endeared him to his family and friends, I did not feel at liberty to dwell upon. His intellectual and social qualities I have not spoken of. I consider the discourse wholly inadequate as "a delineation of character," but I give it as "a tribute to the memory" of one whom to have known I consider one of the chief blessings of my life. It is for those who have known and loved him, and not for others.

Very truly yours,

C. C. Shackford.

Messrs. Lincoln and Thaxter.

SERMON.

HE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH. — *Heb.* xi: 4.

THERE is no voice which speaks like that which comes to us after the earthly voice has ceased. There is no footprint whose impress can be fully determined, until after the foot has been removed from the sands of time. The infant, uttering but its first feeble cry, and then passing away, has become one among the countless forces of spiritual being in the universe of God. How penetrating this voice is, and how deeply imprinted this footprint, many a parent's heart can testify. The earth is thenceforward a different place, and life wears a different hue. A change has been wrought in the whole world of nature, and in all its sights and sounds. The seasons bear another message to the soul than before, for there is mingled with them that plaintive cry, that spiritual music which breathes of trust, resignation, and hope.

Every human life has its voice that speaks in most impressive utterance as death gathers into one tone its peculiar teachings. As we hurry on together, immersed in our various objects of interest, we reflect little upon the kind of influence which our friends exert upon ourselves and others. When they are gone, we cannot but listen to their voice, and strive to interpret their utterance. It forces itself upon us by the void which it makes in all our thought. We miss that tone in proportion to its purity and its power. Blessed is that life which leaves an impress deep in the tablets of loving hearts; in the memory of nearest friends; in the thoughts, aspirations, and hopes of those who have communed with it from day to day upon the earth. For this life still speaks from the upper sphere; it mingles with increased power in all the future; it makes the invisible world a reality in that spiritual atmosphere which it brings, and in that halo of glory which it sheds around.

Often when we chide ourselves for too keen a remembrance of the departed, this remembrance is but the fulness of impression made by the life whose teachings Death has sealed with his ineffaceable signet, and has thus given to them the sacred power which was their due. We cannot but listen in order to catch, if it be possible, that tone which seems so

much more beautiful and inspiring than we shall ever hear again. We cannot but dwell upon the echoes of that footstep which falls upon the soul with such a sense of rhythmic power. The soul does well to keep its choicest memories green. It does well, amidst the on-sweeping crowd of life's duties, trials, and solicitudes, as new scenes open, as other horizons bound the vision, and other interests awaken the heart, to listen to the spiritual voice of him whom we call dead, but who "yet speaketh." There is often no living memory where there is the most hopeless sadness, and no sorrowful sickness of heart where there is the most intense recollection of the departed. There may be, too, no forgetfulness, where there is no distinct and definite shaping to the thought of that individual life which has ceased to manifest itself in a mortal form. The life may intermingle with all the spirit's loves, joys, and aspirations; its teachings may come, not in lessons of words, but, as a strain of music, blend so softly with every internal affection, that we do not consciously recognize its presence.

The real quality of a life is not perceived, for the most part, while the senses take cognizance of it as well as the spirit. The footprint can be measured only after the foot is withdrawn. The influence ex-

erted by each one is not to be weighed, except as that influence is no longer directly felt. It then comes over us with a gradually accumulating power. It grows upon the imaginative soul from day to day, and we learn to appreciate its real beauty, its characteristics of harmony, of truth, of expressiveness and power, as we grow into the appreciation of some work of art. It holds, subdues, and purifies our whole interior being. The voice of the departed speaks in tones of a more thrilling and diviner music than the voice of the living. Not until they are gone from the atmosphere of earth, does the full power of an atmosphere of spirit envelop the loving and self-sacrificing parent, the courageous martyr to the truth, the heroic and saintly doers of justice and of right. Their lives become, after their departure, an inheritance to the world. And thus the benignant Providence makes out of death a spiritual teacher, and builds up a glorious form of immortal power out of the pallid form of perishing dust.

The earnest writer to the Hebrews, as he felt himself surrounded by the cloud of witnesses, — dwellers in the upper sphere, — heard brave words of encouragement, tones of exhortation to steadfastness and persistent truth. And this cloud envelops us now. Who cannot hear, if he will listen, voices speaking

from it to-day — of some innocent child with smile of ineffable love; of some revered parent with kindly, cheering, and, perhaps, reproving tone of undying affection; of some dear friend of the heart, giving blessed counsel and hope, calming the fevered pulse and nerving to fresh endeavor? It comes like dew to the withering grass, like the morning breeze upon the heated brow. The spiritual is no longer a vague and unsubstantial dream. It becomes near and real. As day after day adds to the number of those who speak to us from its realm of mysterious power, it ceases to be that far-off and unknown shore; it is peopled with those living and beloved ones who have been the joy of our life, and whom we can think upon only as the possessors of a yet fuller measure of pure affection, and of a more widely expanding sphere of power to act and to bless. That upper world is no longer a land of shadows and of death. *There* are members of our own household, and our hopes, joys, and loves are entwined with theirs; saintly and revered ones are there whose affection is inwoven with each fibre of our being; lovers of truth, doers of good, toilers with the hand, the heart, and the brain, for universal ends which were not limited by the world of time, and which its loss cannot diminish or take away. Those lives, we feel,

must flow on "without break or flaw;" they make real to us the risen life of the spirit; they make the future world the encompassing and hallowing atmosphere of the present, passing scene of time.

This speech we hear by faith, and it never "can be proved." The voice comes to the inward ear as does the voice which speaks of the existence of God. His presence is not recognized by outward eye or outward ear. Faith only can bring Him within the soul's firmament. He *seems* to be removed from the perception of man's lower faculties of sense, but it is in order that man may grow into the higher and more glorious life of faith. Only when the form of Jesus was withdrawn from the earthly eye of his followers, were their spiritual faculties unlocked and their inner perceptions made clear; then they saw him in the heavenly glory; then he was to them no longer a suffering man, weary, fainting, dying, but the one glorified life at the right hand of God. Faith is better than sight, for it reveals that which was hidden by the veil of the sense. The departed comes as a spiritual presence with an increased power to make pure and strong.

We hear a voice speaking to-day. With what solemn and reproving tone does it rebuke all unmeaning eulogy! But there are impressions left by

this footstep that has passed on, which even our friend, so modest in his own self-estimate, and so severe in his own judgment of truth when applied to himself, would not forbid to be read off as lessons for our guidance and our consolation. We cannot turn away and heedlessly neglect this legacy of a life. There can be no gift like that of a life, conscientious, loving, devoted to spiritual uses, and universal, ideal ends. The outward gifts of fortune are nothing compared with this. Without this, the widespread reputation, and extended, superficial influence, are but a hollow mockery and empty sound. A faithful life is a solid and perpetual legacy of good, which cannot be wasted or spent. It accumulates with the passing moments, and multiplies itself in the fleeting forms of the onward-moving generations.

It is this great legacy that we have received. Each step was taken with a fearful sense of responsibility, and with an earnest care that fills us now with a trembling wonder, and makes our own lives seem all unworthy and full of trifles light as the bubble that floats and glistens for a moment with rainbow hues, and then breaks into nothingness. The prizes of ambition, of wealth, of worldly influence, were before him within easy grasp, but he turned away from them all, that he might lay hold upon

that real possession, — character. To *be* true; to have everything rest upon a foundation of everlasting rock; to let all go but genuine virtues, and to express only that which *was* actually within, was his single aim. It was for him to build up the internal kingdom; to be honest in every thought; to be pure in every purpose; to be real and whole in every deed, and not to seek for esteem, or learning, or riches, or influence, or power. He could have swayed masses of men by his soaring thought, his sharp invective, his eloquent appeal; he could have addressed juries with success, for he knew men's motives and sounded each man's depth; he knew the weaknesses of his fellows, and by what passions and what influences they were swayed; but he would not do this and be false to himself. It was for him to guard the issues of his life; and to be a true man was, in his conviction, more than to be an effective speaker. It was real being that he sought, and not external effect. To him it seemed that he must resign the apparent, in order to secure the real, success. He could not reconcile them for himself, but he did not judge others, or make a rule for others in this respect. So must it be for his own real growth, but to others there might be a different method. To his own master each one standeth or falleth. He stood.

His own conviction of what was right for him was unalterably adhered to. He saw straight through those veils of sophistry by which so many delude themselves, shading from the clear brightness of the all-revealing light their infidelities and their weaknesses, and excusing their conformities to pretentious appearances and artificial methods of thought and life. Yet so tender were his compassions for natural, human frailties and sins; so feminine were his affections and sympathies, that confidence flowed out to him as naturally as the exhalations and vapors of earth seek the upper firmament, where the warm, outshining sunbeams receive and welcome them. That only which was artificial, conventional, and untrue, and yet which claimed for itself superior sanctity and worth, closed itself at his presence, and removed itself from his penetrating gaze. It shrunk, as the birds of the night, from the outstreaming rays of the daylight. But to him, his own sense of right and vision of truth, his own perception of universal, impersonal principle, was too sacred a thing to be tampered with or repressed. He felt that this higher was a divine inspiration, a "God inning in the flesh," which was to be treated reverently as a guest to whom he was to bring, with trembling haste, and even awe, all that was his.

He measured himself by no external standard, for the majestic glory of an ideal form of beauty, goodness, justice, and truth confronted him while yet upon the threshold of life, and in its presence all the honors, gauds, and shining prizes of outward and lower respect, were dimmed and stripped of their shining array, and he felt that they could not meet the real wants of his being. To him life was a battle, an internecine contest of world against the soul. Never could he say, "Soul, thou canst now take thine ease, for thou hast laid up much treasure, thy barns are overflowing, thy possessions are enough, thy riches are abundant, now rejoice in thy plenty." He wanted Virtue herself and not virtues; a love of truth, pure and unerring in its instinctive attractions, and not truths outside of him, however respected by other minds. He wanted righteousness itself, not a superinduced form of excellence, however perfect in its contour of propriety and worth.

To him life was an earnest struggle to conquer every partial and selfish tendency of evil, every natural impulse which warred against the beauty and power of the spirit. He entered into the wilderness, and he heard there, unterrified, the howling of the wild beasts of the desert; he bore, unflinching, the scorching sun, and breasted the driving storm. Day

and night was he in the deep, and he felt the billows rushing and swelling over him, but he trusted, and waited, and struggled still, for he knew in whom and in what he believed. He turned away from appearance to reality; he welcomed obscurity, loneliness, suffering, and sacrifice. He felt the worth of the soul, of a living, internal power of discernment, of unswerving fidelity to eternal and divine laws.

To him it would have seemed but an utter loss, to have gained all external things, and, in the process, to have lost the soul to appreciate goodness and to love the right; the soul to reverence and to hope; the soul to endure and to grow stronger by opposition and defeat, and to become more vigorous and self-sustaining with the failure of outward support; the soul to adore an ideal beauty, to seek after an infinite reality, to believe in an absolute truth, and to trust in a perfect love. No man, ambitious for external ends, no one stimulated by selfish and personal desires, ever toiled, planned, and sacrificed for the attainment of a long-craved earthly success, with more earnest purpose and with a more single aim, than he for the perfection of character and the fulfilment of his own ideal of a pure, manly, and well-balanced spiritual excellence.

His object was to *attain*, as a realized status of

the inner being, that which others are content to dream of, and to apprehend only as casual gleamings, or indulge in as passing aspirations. His life, as abstemious and simple as a child's, was without the pride of ascetic narrowness; and, exacting as the most solitary hermit towards himself, he was most genial in his disposition, and most affectionate in the whole tone of his temper and his heart. If he was so self-centred, and of so regulated and uniform a method of life, it was only because he had the power to rein in the fiery steeds of impulse and passion. There was a volcanic nature which he "kept under;" there were forces which he ruled as with a rod of iron.

He was penetrated through and through with the conviction of the all-encompassing spiritual laws, and felt that in the actual sphere in which he was, was the place for him; that only a change in himself, an ever-unfolding growth, could bring him real good; that there was no external sphere, in the farthest heights, or in the remotest boundaries, which could bring to him the force, or help, or remedy, which he did not carry with him in his own internal state. All life seemed to him pervaded by the same essential principles, and every province of it to furnish the same battle-field wherein should struggle sense and faith; time and eternity; matter and spirit; seeming

good and actual fidelity; acceptance of present, passing, superficial desire, and renouncement of it for a higher and more universal benefit.

It was a noble sadness that he felt, for it was the sadness of a struggling soul that sometimes found itself in the shadow of a great sunlight; that watched eagerly by the bedside of some feverish impulse, or some aspiration, beaten back upon the heart, or some consuming anguish of painful sorrow at infirmity, or some deep cry for justice and for right, — watched for the streak of light that should dawn upon the eastern sky, and redden the cold, dark mountain-top, heralding the day. It was a sadness of sympathy with men, to see them as

> "They passed him by like shadows, crowds on crowds,
> Dim ghosts of men, that hover to and fro,
> Hugging their bodies round them, like their shrouds,
> Wherein their souls were buried long ago;
> Who trampled on their youth and faith and love,
> Who cast their hope of human-kind away,
> With heaven's clear messages who madly strove,
> And conquered; and their spirits turned to clay."

To him the humblest life and lowliest condition stretched out into infinity; it had the same overarching heavens for its roof, and the same sun for its light, and the same sweet ministries of love for its

companions, as the grandest and highest of earthly environments. He saw a greater than world-conqueror in him who should overcome the hosts of evil within his own breast, — rebel passions and selfish lusts; a greater than leader of armies in him who should lead on, to the sound of a triumphant choral burst of joy, the hours of useful toil, and ministration to human needs; a greater than artist portraying the beautiful in word, or stone, or color in him who should possess those internal qualities of love and purity, of holiness and inner serenity of soul, of aspiring faith and meek resignation, whose external artistic representation alone is accounted so great a glory; a greater than orator to awaken the applause of shouting multitudes, in him who should, by single-mindedness and childlike simplicity of heart, possess that enthusiasm for high, noble, and patriotic ends, through appeal to which the speaker wins his renown.

As the crowned procession filed along in triumphal march, he asked the warrior for his soul, and weighed him in the balance let down from heaven. He asked the martyr, as the burning flame curled and hissed about his funeral pile, for a purer flame of humble and holy love. He asked of the author and the artist, not the list of his works, not the catalogue of his written books, but the spirit in which he wrought,

the fidelity to conscience, to the inspirations of beauty and truth, to the pure and deathless affections of the heart.

As I trace the imprint of this life which has now been completed, and which, like all others, can alone be rightly measured when the foot itself has been removed, I behold a human soul striving so to live, that the all-surrounding nature, in which it dwelt, should reveal its inner spirit of beauty and wisdom, and be a creative power within; that the common pursuits and familiar relations of daily existence should be pervaded by eternal laws; that day and night, and house and field, should be transfigured in the brightness of a heavenly and spiritual sphere; that the success of personal ends should seem but a little thing compared with that work which may be accomplished within, and that resultant character which may be wrought out by their failure, if failure should come at last.

And what an influence flows from such a life! He is deceived by the mere outside show, who believes that no influence is exerted if it cannot be discerned in visible streams upon the surface of existence. The real power of spirit over spirit is always in proportion to the depth, the purity, the universality, of the force. Often because it is not direct and outward, it acquires a more concentrated influence, and when it

becomes visible, appears upon the surface in some broad and deep river, which waters a whole continent and bears a nation's commerce upon its flowing stream. The real force of a life is to be measured by the depth of influence in individual souls. To have cheered and upheld wavering faith; to have become a conscience and a standard of highest appeal; to have received spiritual confessions and given the helpful, deciding, and inspiring word; to have quickened the sense of right, the love of truth, and the sympathy with the wronged and the oppressed; to have brought home to others the reality of unseen laws and everlasting principles of Providential order and discipline in life; to have become mingled with the best hopes, the purest aspirations, and holiest memories of many hearts; to have been an example of integrity of being, of unresting effort for higher spiritual attainment; to have made the veil which separates between this sphere and the future, between material and spiritual existence, to seem but a thin and almost transparent film; — this is the real influence of that life which has now ceased on earth; this is the highest, truest, and grandest success.

We say, generally, of a life ended here, that its work is done; but to the spiritual eye that deeper

work has but just begun. It is hidden, indeed, but potent and real. It mingles, an unseen power, in the air and sunlight, stilling the tumult of grief and passion, making sacred the earth, and making real the heaven. And there is no one who has been a sharer in the influences of this life, no one who has felt its magnetic touch, who will not say, as memory is stirred within, —

"Whatever way my days decline,
I felt and feel, though left alone,
His being working in mine own,
The footsteps of his life in mine.

"And so my passion hath not swerved
To works of weakness, but I find
An image comforting the mind,
And in my grief a strength reserved.

"Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice;
I prosper, circled with thy voice;
I shall not lose thee though I die."

Lost! gone! dead! It is by faith, by spiritual sympathy, that these words must be clothed with a new meaning. The outward form is removed, but only to make more real the inner life, and reveal to us more clearly the ideal glory. This is more truly the being

whom we loved than that which the eye of sense discerned. It is the vision made blunt by habitual routine, or blurred by life's trivial show, that mistakes, that underrates, that judges falsely. Only when the veil of the outward is rent asunder do we see character in its true light, and estimate aright the worth, and beauty, and spiritual force that dwelt within. Then we know what greatness is in truth, what joy is in faithfulness, what beauty is in love, what infinite glory in the aspirations and struggles of a manly and upright soul.

It is the recognition of these qualities which brings with it the very atmosphere of immortality. It puts death beneath the feet as but one circumstance in the ever-advancing life of the spirit; it enfolds all souls in one divine, overarching sphere of love, and touches the springs of undying hope. Thee, freed spirit! we shall see again. Taught by thee, we will listen to the divine voice; we will bid sorrow and doubt to end, and be reborn in the aspiration after truth and beauty, in the communion with all goodness, in the hope and joy of the immortal life. Thee, the places here that have known, shall know no more forever; but the hearts upon which thou hast smiled shall bless thy memory, and the souls which thou hast quickened to a higher ideal, shall enshrine, as a sacred

treasure, thy life of unresting endeavor, and self-forgetting, humble, consecrated toil. May we be found worthy to meet thee again. Around thee, and around us all, is the same all-enfolding arm of love. That love, — so far-reaching is its sweep, and so universal are its ends, — we shall seek in vain to *know* here in all its purposes and all its methods of hidden wisdom; but we can be sure of this, that love does bless all souls in the many mansions throughout all spheres of being; that it shall blend the darkest shadow with the glowing light, and make the landscape more beautiful for the cloud that hides, for a moment, the golden sun; that darkness and sorrow, that suffering and death, are but one part of a blessed plan of perfect Wisdom and perfect Love.

AN EXTRACT

FROM A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE NORTH CHURCH, IN SALEM, JUNE 3, 1860,

BY

EDMUND B. WILLSON.

AN EXTRACT FROM A SERMON.

* * * And there is another one, whose going forth from this land of shadows to the realities of the unseen but endless life, connects itself in my thoughts with that I have just referred to.* I do not know how widely, or well, he was known in this community; but he must have been very well known to many of you, intimately to some, no doubt, for this, I am told, was his native place and early home. I refer to Mr. John W. Browne. I never met him but once, and that was some years ago. I had never previously heard of him. And yet, in a company of persons, including several of remarkable conversational talent, he left the strongest impression of them all upon my mind; and though the impression which he made by his intelligence, his broad, and just, and high thought, was enough to make him eminent even in that so-

* The death of Rev. Theodore Parker.

ciety; yet it was not for his intellectual qualities that I chiefly minded him, and have remembered him. It was for the elevated moral tone of his talk that he called forth my warmest respect and largest admiration. The high honor which he paid to truth and justice, the noble allegiance he showed to the cardinal principles of Christian righteousness, his unobtrusive, but clear and decided refusal to allow the validity of the common apologies for a professional advocacy of causes sincerely believed to be based on no principle of justice; and much more besides, which I heard from him that evening, gave him a place in my memory and in my respect, which cannot easily be lost. And when I read of the catastrophe by which his earthly life was so instantly cut short, I felt that while earth had one brave, manly heart less beating here in sympathy with goodness and truth, and in communion with God and his children, there was added one to the bright throng of advanced immortals who climb the everlasting heights of knowledge and love.

A RESOLUTION

BY THE

NEW ENGLAND ANTI-SLAVERY CONVENTION;

WITH AN

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH

OF

WENDELL PHILLIPS.

RESOLUTION AND EXTRACT.

In the New England Anti-Slavery Convention at Boston, May 31, 1860, the following resolution was adopted; after presenting which, Mr. Wendell Phillips made the remarks which are subjoined:—

Resolved, That in the death of our beloved friend and fellow-laborer, John W. Browne, the anti-slavery cause has lost a most uncompromising and devoted friend — one who gave to it the aid of strong original powers and the most liberal culture; the example of a life of rare simplicity, and of the most scrupulous and delicate conscientiousness — a spirit of self-sacrifice, and a rigid adherence to absolute right at every cost — a peculiar sweetness and openness of conduct, which won the attention and regard of those who most hated his opinions, and a hand only too generous in lavishing aid on every applicant; in him, the cause of woman, of the poor, the intemperate, the imprisoned, and of the slave, lost a ripe intellect, a brave, loving, and religious spirit, a vigilant and untiring friend, — one who spared neither time, money, nor effort, and in the path of duty asked no counsel of expediency, met cheerfully every sacrifice, paused at no peril, and feared not the face of man.

Mr. Chairman, — You will not, of course, expect me, no one would be expected, to analyze a near friend in the very hour he dies. That would be a cold heart, fit only for a critic, who, in the very hour that he lost one who had made a large share of his life, could hold him off, and take all his separate qualities to pieces, and paint them in words. We are too near, we love too much, to perform such an office to each other. Now, at least, all we can do is to call up some few prominent traits that have been forced upon our observation as we walked side by side with those who have worked and lived with us.

Very few of you knew that most efficient friend named in the resolution I have read; yet, though hidden, he was no slight or trivial servant to the great cause. The purest of all human hearts, — but not, as is sometimes the case with that rare and childlike simplicity, a merely negative character; for he graduated at Harvard in the same class, and was linked as a room-mate, and nearest and most intimate friend, with one whose intellect is the admiration of millions — our Senator, Mr. Sumner; and he was thought by many, indeed by most, of those who stood at the goal of collegiate reputation, the most original and ablest intellect which that class gave to the world.

In the bloom of youth, in the freshness of a rare success in his profession, he placed himself on this platform in the mob years of the anti-slavery enterprise, when to speak an anti-slavery word was starvation, when to hold up an anti-slavery banner was political suicide. Yet, the most promising lawyer in the county of Essex, dowered with the love of the Whig party of that county, he came to this platform with that unconscious fidelity to truth which is incapable of asking first what is expedient. I remember well what checked his political advancement, and it suggests one of the great comforts in this life of a reformer. After all the seeming sacrifices (for they are only seeming) and the hard struggles which are said to mark our lives, we are the happiest of the human race, for God gives us this, the greatest of all rewards: — as we move onward, society shapes itself according to our ideas; we see about us the growing proof, the ever fresh and green evidence that we were right ten years before. Conservatism creeps on, discontented, distrustful, timid, thinking that when you have swept away the cobwebs the roof is coming down, sighing for the good old times, anxious to hide in its grave from the ruin and wickedness it sees all about; but Reform walks onward, its buoyant forehead lit with the twilight of the coming day, and crying, — "All hail!

my brother! I saw you in my dreams! Thank God that he gave me life long enough to see you set jocund foot on the misty mountain-tops of the morrow!" Now, this brave, dear brother, when he stood the pet of Essex, was asked, as the condition of another step of political advancement, at the very threshold of his life, hardly graduated from college — "Will you take the Senatorship, and when there, will you pledge yourself to vote for Daniel Webster?" "Never!" "Then be no longer officer of ours." To-day, in sadness, with veiled face, every heart in Massachusetts acknowledges that the step which that young man rebuked by refusing to pledge himself in advance to its support, was a fatal mistake in the great statesman of New England. That instinctive sense of right which, standing alone on life's threshold, and at the cost of being thought a fanatic and a madman, threw away ambition at the bidding of duty, — Massachusetts puts her seal upon it to-day, and says, "Would to God that we had been as frank, and done as much, and turned away the bitter years which closed the life of our great, our favorite statesman!"

Leaving politics, Mr. Browne, with his characteristic simplicity of character and unconsciousness of talent, deemed himself unfit for the task which others were ready to press upon him. He said to me once, I re-

member, when I urged him to come to this platform, and let us hear again the voice which had delighted us so often, "I ought not to be there; there is nothing in me worthy to stand there; I am shamed away from such a post." Yet the best judge in New England called him "the most pregnant talker he ever met." And never was a demand, of whatever character, made upon him, to which he did not respond with an alacrity and efficiency which showed how mistaken was his own judgment, and how much wiser he would have been to have yielded to our entreaties, and have led where he only consented to follow.

You who remember him so calm, self-poised, and still in manner, speaking in measured words, one by one, saw only half his nature. By constitution, his blood was lava, and his soul thundered and lightened at the sight of wrong, especially at any meanly base act. Indeed, "thunder and lightning" was the pet name he bore among his classmates. But, side by side with this volcano, stood, sleepless and watchful, the most delicate and scrupulous conscientiousness, — too delicate, perhaps, for daily life. When plunged, therefore, into our fierce agitation, he doubted whether he was justified in the hot moments and floods of feeling which such contention let loose on his spirit. It seemed to him his duty, the best part and purest,

to keep the waters of his life calm and still beneath the stars that looked into their depths. Such conviction, however, never made him either an idler or a neutral. His flag was nailed to the mast — no man ever mistook his position. Beneath that flag was so high-souled and transparent a life that none could hate or doubt the bearer. His professional skill, the very best our Bar possessed, was freely given to every poor man. Never rich, his hand was ever open. Nowhere did he fear the face of man; and, as much as our nature can, he surely kept a conscience void of offence towards his fellows, and a soul pure in the sight of God. Patient of labor, in that little heeded and hidden toil so indispensable to every reform he was ever ready. Many of us stood here dowered with the result of his toil; many of us brought to you his ripe thoughts, which his own lip and his own life would have given so much better; and when he fell, I, for one, felt lonelier and weaker in my place in this world and its battle. There are very few men so true to friendship, so loyal, so untiring, that you feel, in closing your eyes, "I leave one behind me who will see that over my grave no malicious lie goes unrebuked, and that justice is done to my intentions." I always felt that if Providence should take me first, there was a voice and a hand

which thirty years of tried and stanch friendship would place as a shelter over my memory. Would to God I could do him to-day, half the justice that his sword would have leapt from its scabbard to do for me!

REMARKS

BY

JAMES DANA,

AT A MEETING OF THE CLASS OF 1830.

And doubtless unto thee is given
A life that bears immortal fruit
In such great offices as suit
The full-grown energies of heaven.

But thou and I have shaken hands
Till growing winters lay me low;
My paths are in the fields I know,
And thine in undiscovered lands.

TENNYSON.

REMARKS.

On the evening of Commencement Day, July 18, 1860, after the conclusion of the exercises at Cambridge, a meeting of the class of 1830, of which Mr. Browne was a member, was held at the Tremont House, in Boston, when Mr. Dana made the subjoined remarks: —

I trust that some of the class will give us information of the life of our late classmate, and esteemed and lamented friend, Browne.

You recollect him in college as acknowledged to be one of the ablest and most talented of our number. You recollect the decision which marked his character; his courage and daring; his manly bearing; his high sense of honor, and his impetuous temperament; his freedom from boyish tricks, or conduct unbecoming a gentleman. You recollect his recitations and his beautiful rendering of the classics. An earnest

spirit was infused into all he said or did. He graduated, as you know, in rank very near to our other departed friend who received the highest honors of the class.*

He did not have many intimate associates, for he *then* comprehended the true aims of life, and was a diligent general student, as well as faithful in the college course of study. Perhaps he was not popular — in the college sense of the word; but all who knew him respected him. During one of our vacations he taught school in my native town of Groton, and then I frequently had the pleasure of meeting him at my father's house. He told me that he found teaching a village school anything but congenial. After we graduated, I did not meet him until he had commenced the practice of law in the eastern part of the city of Lynn, in what is known as the Quaker Village, where he possessed the confidence and esteem of that community. He soon assumed a more than respectable position at the bar, and his friends had reason to anticipate for him a brilliant professional career; but after a few years I heard that he had essentially changed his views of life, its duties and obligations, and had decided to relinquish the practice of his profession.

* Judge Thomas Hopkinson, deceased 1856.

I seldom met him until he resumed its practice in this city; and then, how changed, how different from when I knew him in college! His spirit seemed subdued; he was modest and gentle almost as a woman. His manner was quiet, sometimes seeming even timid. He was kind and friendly. We had little political sympathy, but that did not diminish our friendship, and he greeted me almost as a brother. We frequently met in our professional walks, and our association was most agreeable.

He did not try many cases before juries. He was quite equal to it, but he did not find the sharp and sometimes almost angry conflicts of jury-trials congenial to his temperament. He was an eminent lawyer, and fitted to adorn any branch of the profession, but he preferred its quiet walks, and more than one of his clients has borne witness to me of his ability, his stern integrity, and his fidelity to all trusts committed to him.

REMARKS

BY

CHARLES SUMNER.

Il n'y a que les grands cœurs qui sachent combien il y a de gloire à être bon.

FÉNELON.

REMARKS.

I SHOULD feel unhappy if this little book of tribute to my early friend were allowed to appear, without a word from me. We were classmates in college, and, for two out of the four years of undergraduate life, we were chums. We were also together in the Law School. Perhaps no person now alive knew him better during all this period. Separated afterwards by the occupations of the world, I saw him only at intervals, though our friendship continued unbroken to the end, and when we met it was always with the warmth and confidence of our youthful relations.

Of all my classmates, I think that he gave, in college, the largest promise of future eminence, mingled, however, with an uncertainty whether the waywardness of genius might not betray him. None then imagined that the fiery nature, nursed upon the study of Byron, and delighting always to talk of his poetry and life, would be tamed to the modest ways which

he afterwards adopted. The danger seemed to be that, like his prototype, he would break loose from social life, and follow the bent of a lawless ambition, or at least plunge with passion into the strifes of the world. His earnestness at this time sometimes bordered on violence, and in all his opinions he was a partisan. But he was already a thinker, as well as a reader, and expressed himself with accuracy and sententious force. Voice harmonizes with character, and his then was too apt to be ungentle and loud.

They who have only known him latterly will be surprised at this glimpse of him in early life. Indeed, a change so complete in sentiment, manner, and voice, as took place in him, I have never known. It seemed like one of those instances in Christian story where a man of violence is softened suddenly into a saintly character. I do not exaggerate in the least. So much have I been impressed by it at times that I could hardly believe in his personal identity, and I have recalled the good Fra Cristofero, in the exquisite romance of Manzoni, to prove that the simplest life of unostentatious goodness may succeed to a youth hot with passion of all kinds.

To me, who knew him so well in his other moods, it was touching in the extreme to note this change. Listening to his voice, now so gentle and low, while

he conversed on the duties of life, and with perfect simplicity revealed his own abnegation of worldly ambition, I have been filled with reverence. At these times his conversation was peculiar and instructive. He had thought for himself, and expressed what he said with all his native force refined by a new-born sweetness of soul, which would have commended sentiments even of less intrinsic interest. I saw how, in the purity of his nature, he turned aside from riches and from ambition of all kinds, and contented himself with a tranquil existence, undisturbed by any of those temptations which promised once to exercise such sway over him. But his opinions, while uttered with modesty, were marked by the hardihood of an original thinker, showing that in him

> "the Gods had joined
> The mildest manners and the bravest mind."

His early renunciation of office — opening the way to a tempting political career — when formally tendered to him, is almost unique. This was as long ago as 1838, while he was yet a young man; and here his sagacity seemed to be as remarkable as his principles. At that early day, when the two old political parties had been little criticised, he announced that their strife was "occasional and temporary, and that

both had forgotten or overlooked the great principle of equal liberty for all, upon which a free government must rest as its only true and safe basis." He then proceeded to dissolve his connection with parties, in words worthy of perpetual memory. "I disconnect myself from party," he said, "whose iron grasp holds hard even upon the least of us, and mean in my little sphere, as a private individual, to serve what seems to me the cause of the country and humanity. I cannot place currency above liberty. I cannot place money above man. I cannot fight heartily for the Whigs and against their opponents, when I feel that whichever shall be the victorious party, the claims of humanity will be forgotten in the triumph, and that the rights of the slave may be crushed beneath the advancing hosts of the victors." No better words than these have been uttered in our political history. In this spirit, and with his unquestionable abilities, he might well have acted an important part in the growing conflict with Slavery. But his love of retreat grew also, and he shrank completely from all the activities of political life. There was nothing that was not within his reach; but he could not be tempted.

I cannot disguise that at times I was disposed to criticise this retreat, as suggesting too closely the

questionable philosophy concentrated in the phrase, *Bene vixit qui bene latuit.* But as often as I came within the sphere of his influence and felt the simple beauty of his life, — while I saw how his soul, like the sensitive leaf, closed at the touch of the world, — I was willing to believe that he had chosen wisely for himself, or at all events that his course was founded on a system deliberately adopted, upon which even an early friend like myself must not intrude. Having always the greatest confidence in his resources, intellectual as well as moral, I was never without hope that in some way he would make his mark upon his country and his age. If he has not done this, he has at least left an example precious to all who knew him.

SELECTIONS

FROM

NOTICES OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

MR. BROWNE,

WHICH APPEARED IN THE NEWSPAPERS OF MAY, 1860.

SELECTIONS.

(*From the Salem Gazette, May* 8, 1860.)

To those who well knew John W. Browne, it may seem almost like an offence to his gentle and retiring spirit to take public notice of his virtues and his character. Yet he was one of those who impress themselves so deeply upon the minds of friends, that it is hard to refrain from giving wider utterance than the private circle allows, to some sense of his worth.

Somewhat recluse in his habits, few in this place of his birth knew him well enough rightly to appreciate either the powers of his mind, or the beauties of his character. To those few his memory is hallowed and endeared in a peculiar manner. They saw in him a man of brilliant gifts — whose thoughts far transcended the ordinary range of thought — whose common talk was replete with wisdom and with eloquence — to whose mind the subtlest distinctions in

metaphysics and in morals unfolded themselves in clearness — a man of rare endowments, both as to insight and utterance.

And if his mind, wonderfully rich in high and pure thoughts, attracted and satisfied those who were admitted to his intimacy, his character held them by a still stronger bond, winning respect and esteem and love. It was remarkable for its childlike and perfect sincerity. One felt that he never did a thing, or spoke a word, or made a profession for the sake of appearances, or with any thought as to how his deeds or his words might affect him in the estimation of others. At all times he was himself — impulsive, yet controlled — regardful of the feelings of others, yet more careful to maintain the right under all circumstances and on all occasions. Fastidious, even to daintiness, in his tastes and his habits, he appeared never to shrink from any duty, however unpleasant, if he felt satisfied that he could worthily accomplish the work to which it called him. He seemed like one removed from the motives and incentives which others acknowledge, and to have but a single guide to his conduct, and that, his sense of right, to which he sacrificed ambition and honor and worldly profit, all of which his gifts and his acquirements would have enabled him to gratify and attain to. It may be that

he did not forego with ease the distinctions and the position which he might have claimed, but having foregone them he had no regrets for their loss. He felt that he could not mingle in the common strifes of the world without harm to his nature, and he withdrew from them, not without a struggle, (for he had most of the elements of success,) but yet completely. To some extent his feelings in this direction may have been morbid, but if so it was a failing on the side of virtue; and he himself was perhaps the best judge in the case. His scrupulous, his perhaps over-scrupulous conscientiousness, was one of the most noticeable traits in his character. It seemed to those who knew him best, as if it would be well-nigh as impossible for him, consciously, to do the thing which he thought not to be right, as for the sun to go backwards in his course. This reliance of his friends upon his perfect rectitude was the most touching tribute that could be paid to his character, as it is now the most satisfactory reflection upon his memory. While injustice and oppression in any form or against any person created within him almost a storm of excitement, he never, or if ever, only for a moment, forgot to be strictly just to the thoughts and opinions of others as well as carefully mindful of their feelings.

His love of nature was very strong, and peculiar in its character. The world of matter was to him no dead machinery wound up and set in motion by a far-off God millions of ages ago, — no mere arrangement for the pleasure and convenience of man. He saw it instinct with the life of a present God, infused with His love, and having high uses and the grandest of purposes; and thus to him Nature was a great instructor and an ever-present comforter. For him there were "sermons in stones and good in everything;" and in the smallest insect, which others count vile and hateful, he recognized nice adaptations and wonderful powers, saw in it a being worthy of creation and care, and thus an object of love, — and so he defended it and sheltered it with a tenderness which not many could appreciate, and which some would have mocked. The common things which we meet in our walks, — the little bugs and small flowers which most pass by, or tread upon, heedlessly, — he lingered over and cherished, delighting in their rare beauties, admiring their nice instincts and curious ways, and ever regardful of them as a portion of the great life of the world. All nature, indeed, was so alive to him that he never seemed to be more than half persuaded but that the things which we call insensate, — the trees, the plants, the stones, the ele-

ments, — have a sentient life of their own, hidden from the coarse senses of men, but real; and so he was tender of them all, liked not to see them thoughtlessly broken, scarcely liked to see them disturbed or changed.

His love of truth was supreme — his mental hardihood and moral courage something remarkable. He blinked no opinions to which his logic led him, nor ever counted their cost, nor shrunk from any conclusions (however they might differ from the prevailing thought,) which his reason and his conscience approved, but accepted them in the simplest manner, as God's truth revealed to him, to which he owed allegiance, and which he strove to incorporate with his common life. The reserve of his nature did not allow him to be demonstrative, but he was touchingly tender and affectionate in all his relations with his friends. Uncounted, unrecorded, (except above and in thankful hearts,) unostentatious deeds of kindness to them and to others, and especially to such as had need or suffered wrong, follow him with their grateful testimony. In their memories he lives as one of the most pure, most just, most unselfish of their recollections, — upright before God, downright before men.

A.

(*From the Boston Daily Advertiser, May* 5, 1860.)

In the death of Mr. Browne, the world has lost a man, who made it a better place to live in. To a clear, piercing intellect, and a rich fancy, he united a gentle, rare humor, and a cordial sweetness that will make his memory especially dear to his companions. But his friends knew that he had a heart of gold. None but those who had tested and tried him, knew how faithful and true was his nature, how lofty his principles, how broad and comprehensive his sympathies.

He was from taste and habit a silent man, and had no desire for public life. The public, however, has always an interest in the death of a man like him, since a virtue is felt to have gone out, with his life, from the earth: there is, by so much, (and how much!) of honor, truth, nobility, piety, in it less.

To draw nearer, — yet without intrusion into that inner circle, sacred from all sympathy but that of silent tears and prayers, — it may be said that, to those whose happiness it has been to know him well, to listen from time to time to his fervent word, to be lifted in sympathy with his calm philosophy, as by the strong wing of an angel, to purer regions of thought and motive, the remembrance of him will

always be one of the warmest admiration and affection. To his pure and lofty soul the moment that changed aspiration to true life, however sudden the call, must have been one of joyful welcome; — and, because he has thus lived, we can say, with full hearts, "Blessed are the dead!" H.

(*From the Boston Daily Advertiser, May* 7, 1860.)

* * One hardly knows how to speak of a man whose daily life had its daily expression in a noble, highly cultivated intellect, in a morality so pure, so attractive, so delicate, in a character so lofty, so unselfish, so unconscious, that your estimate of him could only come of your own harmony — sympathy with his own nature. He was almost womanly in his gentleness. His voice had that character of lowness, so

"Excellent a thing in woman,"

which always commands a willing hearing in man. When stirred, and stirred he could be, it was out of his large deep eye shone the power and brightness of his soul, which, without noise, commanded you to see, to acknowledge, and to feel it. * * * * *

Our friend was, of course, in ready sympathy with the poor, the helpless, the stranger. It was my privilege for more than eight years to be associated with him in the management of a society's concerns whose object it was to help the most helpless of men — the discharged convict. Here was a man who, for life, had been shut out, for crime, from the cheerful ways of man, — a legal slave, — the daily companion of criminals, — denied conversation even with them, — who was to be solitary in a crowd, — cut off from the ready, cheerful sympathy of wife, children, and friends, — and in deathlike silence among the living was to learn the great reason of repentance and to prepare for its meek works. Our society received this man into its care at the gate of his prison, — took him to hand and to heart, in the full sunlight of his new-born liberty, — took him to a cheerful home, — clothed, sheltered, fed him, — but above all gave him employment in the trade he had learned in prison, and which the society's agent had procured for him before his discharge.

Here was a field in which our friend loved to work. He was the secretary and was busy at meetings in keeping the record. When occasion was he would lay down his pen and speak, and thus with his low, harmonious, let me say beautiful, voice, give his views

of the subject before the board. His word of wisdom, which, like that from above, was just and always gentle, we heard with delight and cheerfully heeded, or when there were different views held by others at the table, these had their character from the deep tone, the good sense, and quiet manner of our secretary.

Mr. Browne had a public life, both professional and political. Of this last I knew the most. He was a reformer. Politics with him was not selfishness. He looked not and labored not for place. His was the moral of politics, for the science of the management of a nation's affairs has a moral — a principle which is true as is that which holds the physical world in place, order, beauty; and in his political life he looked steadily and wisely to the great principle which is the only sure light in the path of a politician. He was a lover of freedom, and freedom he would have, and defend for all others. At times I have heard him speak of the slavery of the Republic. He did not for a moment admit the dogma of Machiavel, who says, "The interests of every republic demand that the State shall be rich, and the citizens poor." No. He believed no such thing, nor did he more believe that in a republic a part of the citizens shall be SLAVES, and the other

part FREE. He made open war upon this doctrine. As some one says of Burns, —

> He loved the battle for his bread,
> But would not be its slave ;
> Indifferent if alive or dead, —
> But freedom he would have.

And what he would have for himself, our friend demanded for every other man. * * * * * * * *

He spoke always for man. He was no formalist, and had not dwarfed and screwed up his faith in a written creed. He would be free, and gain moral and intellectual food from whatever source to his convictions was a true one. *Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*, was the motto, the very note of his life, and yet so gentle, so gentlemanlike was he in his outlived truth, that he never offended you. He would have been most happy in the widest, deepest friendship, in expressed regard and harmony, but he would not fight vulgarly even for a consummation which would have made him so happy. * * * * * * *

But I must bring to a close this hasty sketch of the character of one so loved and so reverenced by all who knew him. He has passed away so suddenly, for us so sadly, that we hardly feel that he is gone. We look again to see him in the busy ways of men, working, in feeble health, so cheerfully for others, as

if all his life were a holiday. We will bear him in faithful memory; and in our knowledge, love, and reverence of him, find motives for laboring to imitate him. *

(*From the New York Tribune.*)

* * He was a man of very marked characteristics. An ardent philanthropy, united with the utmost gentleness and kindness, a fearless love of truth, a manly independence, and a singularly sensitive conscientiousness especially distinguished him. When justice and right were to be sustained and defended, his purse was always open, and his services free and active. He was a warm friend of the slave, and on the subject of slavery was ever outspoken, bold, and uncompromising. In legal knowledge and attainment he was hardly second to any member of the bar in his native State, and one of the most distinguished members of the profession, now a United States Senator, recently remarked that Mr. Browne would be one of the most eminent advocates of the country if he could lay aside his conscience. L.

(*From the Necrology of Graduates of Harvard College, published annually under the direction of the Association of Alumni.*)

John White Browne was instantly killed in Braintree, Mass., May 1, 1860, by accidentally falling from the platform of a railroad car while the train was in motion. He was 50 years of age. He was son of James and Lydia (Vincent) Browne, and was born in Salem, March 29, 1810. His father was the eldest lineal descendant of Elder John Browne, the Ruling Elder of the First Church of the Massachusetts Bay Colony at Salem, whose acceptance of the Eldership the Rev. Mr. Higginson made the condition of his own settlement as pastor. His great-grandfather, for whom he was named, was John White, whose daughter, Mary White, was the wife of Elder William Browne, and mother of James Browne, the father of John White Browne. Both William and James were Elders in the East Church, Salem — Unitarian, under the pastorate of the late Dr. William Bentley (H. U. 1777) — James succeeding at the death of his father.

The subject of this notice was fitted for college at the Salem Classical School, under the charge of Theodore Ames and Henry Kemble Oliver. While in college he was the chum of Hon. Charles Sumner. He attained to a very high rank of scholarship in his

class, and graduated with distinguished honors. He studied law one year at the Law School at Cambridge, one year with Hon. Rufus Choate (D. C. 1819) and one year with Hon. Leverett Saltonstall (H. U. 1802) in Salem. He practised his profession several years in Lynn, but about twelve years before his death he removed to Boston, where he continued in practice, principally as a conveyancer, until his decease. In 1837 he was elected a Representative to the Legislature, and in 1838, during his absence from the State, he was nominated by the Whig party of Essex county as a candidate for the State Senate. On his return he declined the nomination, for the reason that he was unwilling to become the candidate of any party for political office. From that time he carefully avoided political prominence, (although he took a warm and constant interest in the course of public affairs,) devoting himself with extreme assiduity to the business of his profession. He took an especially serviceable part in almost every effort for criminal reform and for the improvement of prison discipline, during his long period of active professional service, and was also earnestly, though quietly, devoted to the promotion of the anti-slavery movement. His daily life was an exhibition of a noble, highly cultivated intellect, of the purest morality, and the

gentlest, kindly feelings for the welfare of the whole human race.

He married, in 1842, Martha Ann Gibbs, daughter of Captain Barnabas Lincoln, of Hingham. They had but one child — a daughter, (Laura Lincoln Browne,) who, with her mother, survives him.